

## BOOK REVIEWS

Shinoda Yasuo: Atsuta Jingū (篠田康雄・熱田神宮).

Gakugeisha Publishing Company, Shōwa 43 (1968), 222 pages, with many photos. No. 2 of the series Nihon no Jinja (the Shrines of Japan).

The author of this book is a high-ranking priest (*gūji*) of the Atsuta Shrine who tells us all about the shrine from its beginning as a local clan temple in about 113 A.D. during the reign of Emperor Keikō (71–130) to its elevation to the second rank, that is next to the Ise Shrine, in the hierarchy of State Shrines, during the Meiji era (1868–1912). Its beginnings are semi-mythological. The son of Emperor Keikō, Yamato Takeru, had started on his expedition to the East against tribes hostile to the Yamato clan. For this task Princess Yamato, high priestess at the Ise Shrine, had confided to him a divine sword (*shinken*) that was to save his life. In the province of Suruga the enemy had set a reed-grass field on fire to smoke out the Imperial troops, but the miraculous sword moved down the grass. The general returned to Owari and resided with Miyazu Hime. This noble lady took care of the “grass mowing sword” (*kusanagi no shinken*). Only in her old age did she entrust the sword to a shrine in Atsuta. Later, historically speaking, after the palace revolt in Heian, known as the Jinshin troubles in 672, during which the Owari clan had sided with Prince Ōyama, who later became Emperor Temmu (673–686), the Atsuta Shrine was made the official keeper of the divine sword and seven guardians were installed by Imperial order at the temple and put in charge of the worshipping ceremonies. At the same time the Emperor Temmu made the sword itself an object of worship (*shintai*). This worship was offered first in the Main Hall (*seiden*), later for a long time in the Doyō Hall, and since Meiji time again in the Main Hall, to the Great God of Atsuta (Atsuta Daijin), whereas in the side halls five other gods were worshipped, that is, Amaterasu Omikami, Susanoo no Mikoto, Yamato Takeru no Mikoto, Miyazu Hime no Mikoto, and Inadane no Mikoto. Because of its intimate connection with the interests of the Imperial clan the Atsuta shrine soon obtained a high rank which is attested by the *Engishiki* (published 927 A.D.), in which the shrine ranks are strictly fixed. The Owari clan in whose territory the shrine is situated, was a faithful supporter of the Imperial clan, and the favors shown to the shrine are understandable. The office of the shrine minister was much desired by noble families in view of the high rank and the landed property attached to the shrine. As could be expected, in the later Heian time the powerful Fujiwara clan had always a hand in the collation of offices and land.

After the downfall of the Fujiwara and the ascendancy of the Minamoto clan the favors bestowed on the Atsuta Shrine were continued by those in power, the same holds true for the periods of Ashikaga and Momoyama. In the early years of the Tokugawa rule the shrine had a meagre time, but the later Tokugawa made good the temporary neglect. The movement which led to the restoration of the direct Imperial rule and then this rule itself in modern times raised the Atsuta Shrine to second rank among

the shrines of State Shintô. The Allied occupation after Japan's defeat in the Pacific War abolished State Shintô. The shrines could now continue to exist only as religious corporations (*shūkyō hōjin*). The number of visitors during the first days of New Year is increasing year after year, which shows that the shrine is again enjoying great popularity among the two million inhabitants of Nagoya and that of the densely populated Mino-Owari plain. The shrine had suffered severe damage in the bombing of Nagoya. The divine sword which had been kept in a temporary hall during the war, was returned in 1955 to the newly built Main Hall. Such a transfer is a costly affair and that effected in 1955 tells of a regained prosperity.

Reading the rich history of the Atsuta Shrine, this reviewer was always on the look-out for the religious significance of the shrine. It began, as said above, as a local clan-god shrine and as such it was the religious center of agricultural and social life. It gained political significance during the process of the unification of the country through its close connection with the Imperial house. Later holders of power who made use of the religious prestige of the Emperor in their own interests, continued to keep the shrine in high esteem. The higher the shrine, the stronger its god. Minamoto Yoritomo, the founder of the Kamakura government (1192-1333), whose wife was the daughter of the chief shrine priest, showed himself especially anxious to secure the blessing of the Atsuta gods for his rule. Also Oda Nobunaga prayed fervently to them before starting on his military expeditions. The worst time for the shrine must have been the last decades of the Sengoku period (1490-1600). The whole country was in a state of devastation. Extant documents of 1765 inform us that the chief priest had petitioned the holder of the fief of Owari for old clothing so that shrine ceremonies could be decently performed. In the early decades of the Tokugawa rule an annual delegation of the Atsuta Shrine was sent to Edo to ask the Shōgun for subsidies needed for the repair of the shrine, but always in vain. When the poet Bashō visited the shrine in 1684, he found it still in a deplorable condition. For the time being the Tokugawa governors were hard pressed by more urgent affairs than the repair of shrines in the provinces. But after fifty years of insistence from Atsuta Shrine authorities the Bakufu, or the shogunate government, decided to do something. The fifth Shōgun Tsunayoshi (1680-1709) saw to it that the Atsuta Shrine was thoroughly overhauled.

A perusal of the book on the Atsuta Shrine inevitably elicits some reflections on the religious values of this sanctuary. No doubt, in its beginnings gods were invoked there for their blessings on crops, for peace, health and harmony in the community. This function of the shrine for the community did not cease when the shrine was made part of a religio-political establishment. Perhaps the new set of gods to be worshipped there did not mean much for the local population. But in a great shrine a whole cluster of gods is worshipped in side-shrines. In Atsuta forty-four gods have their shrines. The highest god there is Atsuta Daijin, the Great God, as such is worshipped the divine sword of Yamato Takeru, popularly called Atsutasama, a sword or something else, anyhow this is the "Holy" in Atsuta, a powerful being for high and low, for lords and their subjects.

A sword is also worshipped in the Isogami Jingū in the Nara basin, it is the Futsu no Mitama Tsurugi, the sword of the god Futsu no Mitama. According to legend, when the Emperor Jimmu was on a military expedi-

tion to the East, he fell sick in Kumano, a bear had poisoned the air in the mountains. Then a sword came down from Takamagahara, or the Heaven of the Gods, which destroyed the poisonous spirit of the Emperor's disease, so that the emperor could destroy Nagasunehiko, his enemy in the Kumano area. Thus we know of two cases that a divine sword is a *shintai*, or embodiment of a god, and as such object of worship. We can hardly call such a sword 'fetish', but still it does not tally with the traditional definition of *shintai*, by which we mean a material object which serves as a temporary embodiment of a god during the actual worship. It thus follows that swords could become a *shintai* only at a time when definite shrines for sheltering a *shintai* were built and the presence of the god there was already considered to be permanent.

The Atsuta Shrine complex comprises forty-four shrines, large and small. In the Main Hall are worshipped the Divine Sword and five gods with a special relationship to it. Nearby, flanking the Main Hall, stand two shrines for the worship of Eight-hundred-times-ten-thousand Gods of the East and the Eight-hundred-times-ten-thousand Gods of the West respectively. These innumerable gods are ancestor-gods of clans, gods of agriculture, guardian-gods against epidemics, and gods of local territories. The chief god among them is the ancestor-god of the Owari clan in whose territory Atsuta is situated. In *sessha* (associated shrines) the remote ancestors of the Owari clan are worshipped as *mikogami*, lit. 'August-Children-Gods', which means that the gods in the associated shrines are the children of the Atsuta god (Atsutasan), taken together the main gods collectively. As the first ancestor of the Owari clan Ame no Ho Akari no Mikoto is considered, who is worshipped in another shrine.

As the author of the book on the Atsuta Shrine tells us, the ancestor-gods of the Owari clan are all direct descendants of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. For the population of the city of Nagoya the first of June is a holiday. On this day these *mikogami* are worshipped as guardian-gods of children by a crowd of several ten-thousands of people, giving the term *mikogami* a meaning understandable to them. Within the shrine precincts there is also a Mi-I-sha ('Auguste Shrine of the Well'), and the belief exists that by offering prayers to this shrine one can avoid harm done by insects.

There are still more gods of wider interest. We find in a secondary shrine Ōtoshigami ('Great Year God'), a protector of crops. At this shrine two great agricultural ceremonies are performed, that is, on the 18th of the 6th month the field planting festival (*mi-ta-ue-matsuri*), and in autumn the harvest (*ta-kari*) festival. At the latter a rite called "feeding the crows" (*karasu-gui*) is added, consisting in throwing some rice-corns onto the roof of the hall Doyōden while calling the crows with *hoo-hoo*. It is said that in old times the ceremony did not start before crowds had come flying to pick up the offering.

In one of the attached shrines Uka no Mitama, or 'Divine Spirit of the Food', is worshipped, being a parallel to the goddess of the Outer Shrine (*Gegu*) in Ise. We have here again a protector of the crops. The god is also identified with Inari and believed to bestow blessing on trade. In a side-shrine we find the goddess Mizuha no Me who controls water. People believe that if they wash their eyes with water from the well of the shrine, their eye-sight will become good, and that skin washed with that water will become beautiful.

The gods Sukunahikona no Mikoto and Sugawara Michizane are wor-

shipped as cultural pioneers, the first is believed to be the founder of medical science, the latter of literary studies. Sukunahikona is worshipped only in a Sakaki tree (*Eurya ochmacea*), to the pioneer of literary studies young people come when pressed by entrance examination requirements. They take a stone home from the shrine, and if successful in the examination they bring a stone, twice as big as the first one, back in gratitude. In a little shrine of Izanagi and Izanami women pray for easy delivery. There is also a helpful Goddess of Deafness (*Otsumbo-gami*).

The Atsuta Shrine was originally dedicated to the ancestor gods of the Owari clan, to it was added a mythological superstructure during the process of the pacification and unification of the country under the hegemony of the Yamato clan, and in the course of time mythological gods were invested with functions to fulfil elementary needs of the common people. The same pattern of development we probably find also at the other great shrines of Japan.

We can look also at another aspect of this book on the Atsuta Shrine. Its author is a high ranking priest (*gūji*) at this shrine, and the book appeared in a series which features a number of the best known great shrines of the Japanese nation. In the Introduction the author relates that when throngs of students were on a sight-seeing tour at the shrine, one of them asked the question what purpose the shrine serves (*Atsuta Jingū wa nan no tame ni aru ka*). Our author finds that such a question no student would ask when visiting a zoological garden or the building of the Prefectural Government (*kenchō*). In answer to the above question, the author justifies the existence of the Atsuta Shrine by pointing out its significance in the past and the present in the context of national history and culture. This argument has weight for those who have not lost their national identity or who are regaining it. The Japanese religions with all their shrines and temples are part of Japanese culture and therefore should be cherished by the heart of most. Occasional visitors to the Atsuta Shrine, who personally have perhaps no more interest in it as the average tourist, may be impressed with statistics showing the number of worshippers at New Year. Shōwa 8 (1933) 1,200,000 visitors were counted on the first three days of New Year, Shōwa 10 (1935) 1,780,000, Shōwa 21 (1946), that is the first year after the war, only 400,000, but year after year their number rose again, Shōwa 30 (1955) reaching 1,370,000, Shōwa 43 (1968) 1,690,000. According to answers recently received by the writer of these lines upon inquiry at the shrine, the visitors pay mainly for good crops, for harmony in the family and for traffic safety. The shrine has now also a wedding hall and the shrine priests are said to be always busy there marrying many young couples. The Atsuta Shrine cannot fail to impress the visitor by its simplicity, cleanliness, solemnity of its architecture and rites, and by the faith of its believers who encounter there the Divine.

M.E.

Mabuchi Tôichi: Magico-religious Land Ownership in Central Formosa and Southeast Asia.

In: The Bulletin of the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, No. 29, Taipei, Spring 1970; pp. 349-484.

The author here treats of the magico-religious sanction of the right to land as it is found among primitive peoples who are still in the position to occupy and cultivate land for the first time and enjoy the *ius primi occupantis*. Violation of this right by outsiders would call down supernatural punishment on the trespasser. The author first states that the belief in the sacredness of Earth is common to ancient peoples. This belief was diversified according to various forms of social organisation and the sort of use to which the land was put for human subsistence, either by hunting or cattle breeding or farming. The power of land reclamation rests with the clan who has moved into the hitherto free land. The clan chief is invested with the power to perform religious rites with regard to the land. There are cases in which land spirits or demons have to be propitiated and worshipped in an annual cycle of rites. In other cases there is simply a mystic connection between the land reclaimed and the representative of the reclaiming clan. Prof. Mabuchi cites several instances in which the land spirits or demons have to be propitiated and worshipped in an annual cycle of rites. Prof. Mabuchi cites several instances in which the priestly functions remain in the hands of the first occupants in case the latter have been conquered by new-comers. The author first examines the ethnographic data from Formosa, then those from Southeast Asia, and in looking for parallels he reaches out to India and even Africa.

Prof. Mabuchi's article is part of the Anniversary Volume of the Bulletin of the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, in honour of Prof. Ling Shun-sheng, who is known for his contributions to the studies on Earth worship and related subjects. From the bibliography in Prof. Mabuchi's article we pick out the following titles of Prof. Ling's publications: *Ancestor Temple and Earth Altar among Formosan Aborigines* (in the above named Bulletin, No. 6, pp. 1-57, with 18 pages of plates), and *Origin of the Ancestral Temples in China* (in: the same Bulletin, No. 7, pp. 141-184 with 6 pages of plates. The two articles are written in Chinese with English summaries.

M.E.

Frances Carpenter: Tales of a Korean Grandmother. Illustrated with reproductions from old Korean paintings. Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo & Rutland (Vermont), 1972. Pocket book size, 288 pages, Yen 650, \$2.95.

On the back cover of the book the authoress is introduced to the reader as a resident of the Far East of long standing. Her acquaintance with Korea goes back to the early years of our century. At that time she collected the 33 tales, which were first published in 1947 by Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, N.Y. Only as a literary device the tales are put here in the mouth of Grandmother Kim. By reading Korean folk tales we

learn, in the easy and pleasant way, much about Korean beliefs, values and standards. The same authoress earlier published "Tales of a Chinese Grandmother," now also available in a Tuttle edition. It goes without saying that books like this promote our understanding of and respect for the Korean people.

M.E.

Richard Arens: Folk Practices and Beliefs of Leyte and Samar.

The collected articles of Fr. Richard Arens, SVD, reprinted. Leyte-Samar Studies, Vol. V, Nos. 1 and 2. Divine Word University, Tacloban, 1971.

It was a good idea indeed to bring the ethnographic articles, which Father Arens had published earlier in various journals, together in one volume. Dealing with folk practices and beliefs of the East Visayan Islands in the Philippines, they form in content and geographic area a well defined unit. The author is now regent of the Colleges of Natural Sciences and Foreign Languages at Fujen University in Taipei, Formosa. When doing his fieldwork in the Visayan Islands and writing the articles on it, he was dean of the Graduate school of St. Paul's College, now the Divine Word University, in Tacloban, Leyte.

The articles contain observations on agricultural rites, on native fishing techniques and animistic fishing rituals, on witches and witchcraft, on medicine men, on fumigation as a healing practice, and, finally, the use of amulets and talismans in Leyte and Samar. Photos and drawings illustrate the text.

We can only wish that further studies on folk practices and beliefs are made and their results made available also outside the Philippines.

M.E.

Kustaa Vilkuna: Finnisches Brauchtum im Jahreslauf.

FFCommunications No. 206. Helsinki, Suomalainen Tiedekatemia (Academia Scientiarum Fennica), 1969; 347 pages, distribution maps, indices, 16 plates with photos.

The reviewer of this book on the annual life cycle of Finland is in no way competent to do this job, but in the interest of comparative folklore research the new volume of the FFCommunications should at least be introduced to our readers. We know that Finland is a rich repository of old folk ways and beliefs and that on them an intense research work has been done, and is being done, by Finnish scholars, who have contributed so much to the stimulation of similar studies in other countries of the world. The ethnic and linguistic composition of Finland and the country's history of interrelationship with neighboring countries, especially in the religious domain, is such that a great variety of religious customs and practices can be expected there. At the same time the economic activities of the Finns by which they eke out their subsistence under not too favorable conditions, are manifold, resulting in an abundance of weather oracles and rules, rites

and magic performances with bearing on agriculture, cattle breeding, fishing, hunting, and even food gathering.

What the reader of this book strikes first, is the rather tightly knit network of calendar days on which some activity has to be done or avoided in order to secure the well-being of humans, animals and plants. The author has done an enormous amount of spade work in the reconstruction of the Finnish calendar, going back to the oldest time in the country's Catholic past, with much hagiography and ikonography for which the Lutheran Reformation had not much sympathy but which often showed a remarkable power of perseverance. This is also true of a certain undercurrent of pre-Christian beliefs and sacrificial rites which have withstood the efforts both of the Catholic and the Protestant Church to abolish or to christianize them. The Churches have succeeded in so far as the centers of communitarian worship are the local parish churches, non-Christian sacrifices and rites having been relegated to families or other smaller circles of cohesion.

Other outstanding features of our new book are the linguistic accomplishments which become evident throughout, as much dialect research work is woven into it, and quite a few folksongs with native text and parallel translation. By elucidating first the original meaning of terms the author presents authentic interpretations of many concepts in the world of Finnish customs and beliefs. A good number of distribution maps from the Atlas of Finnish Folk Culture give additional evidence that the author worked on the highest possible academic level.

Though the above comments have been made by a complete layman in Finnish folklore and life, the encounter with Finnish mankind and culture, as made possible by the present book, has filled him with sympathy for the people, and at the same time with sincere admiration for this new evidence of the exemplary standard of Finnish folklore research.

M.E.

#### A critical and Annotated Bibliography of Philippine, Indonesian and Other Malayan Folklore.

Compiled by Gabriel A. Bernardo. Edited by Francisco Demetrio y Radaza, S.J. Cagayan de Oro City, Xavier University, 1972. 150 pages, 22 illustrations.

In this bibliography the late Prof. Bernardo "covered all the materials on Philippine, Indonesian, Malayan and allied folklore available in the three major public libraries in Manila in 1923" (Editor's Preface). The Editor of the bibliography made use of many additional notes regarding entries which the compiler had left behind.

Das Profil Japans: An Exhibition Catalogue, published by the Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna 1965. With 54 plates on art paper in an appendix and many line drawings in the text.

The organizer of the exhibition and compiler of the catalogue was Dr. Alfred Janata, custodian of the Japan Collection. Many hands have been

working to bring this outstanding collection together. One of the leading European centers of Japanese Studies is to be found in the University of Vienna. Competent specialists joined in the effort to organize the exhibition with its high standard in the service of public information. Even the average educated Japanese could learn about many things for the first time. The exhibition covered religion, production, defense, use of leisure time, pre- and proto-history, the Ainu, the Ryūkyū Islands. In the introductory part of the catalogue we find a survey on geography and history, a map of Japan and a chronology, and in the appendix a selected bibliography. We regret that the circumstances prevented us to report on this catalogue earlier. Its value lasts independently from the exhibition.

M.E.